

## “New Theories” journal: Do We Still Believe in the Power of Images?

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Pictorial/Iconic Turn – 30 years later: Do We Still Believe in the Power of Images?

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Almost thirty years ago, two articles that instigated the theoretical redefinition of the social role of images as well as their ontological foundation at the very end of the twentieth century were published. Namely, the text “Pictorial Turn” by W.J.T. Mitchell and the text “Wiederkehr der Bilder” by Gottfried Boehm. Although they do not establish a new consistent theory in the narrower sense of the term, both authors look at the reality of the beginning of the new millennium, pointing to the dominant role of images and visual communication in general. Their theses are based on the historical interweaving of image and word, art and philosophy, paradigms and their interruptions. Although from today's perspective of instrumentalizing the humanities and abandoning the speculative mind in the name of digital “machine rationality” both of their interventions may seem obsolete, we believe that looking back three decades can better prepare us for asking unorthodox questions today. One of them is the fundamental question that arose from numerous articles and book chapters created after the pictorial/iconic turn of Mitchell and Boehm and after the eponymous book “The Power of Images” by David Freedberg – a question to which we want to get as many diverse answers as possible in the new issue of the “New Theories” journal is “Do we still believe in the power of images?”

In this issue of the journal, we want to deal with the implications of the pictorial/iconic turn on the theory and practice of visual representations, both those that were created under the influence of the turn towards the image, and those that are based on the continuity of post-structuralist humanities, for example on the trail of Martin Jay's theses on “the denigration of vision in twentieth-century French thought” (“Downcast Eyes”, 1993). We are interested in the status of image theories today; are we closer to their ontological determination than we were at the time of “the turn”, or have we given up on philosophical and anthropological insights and answers to the question “what is an image in itself” and “what is an image to us”? We are interested in the insights of the new phenomenology of the image, i.e. noticing and defining shifts in the relationship between the observer and the observed, in the context of immersive and virtual experiences. Related to that, we also ask the question about the possibilities of the new anthropology, i.e. can thinking about the image help thinking in general to save our being-human? The other way round, we ask the question whether digital technologies of production, dissemination and, especially, interpretation of images mean a paradoxical return to the structuralist attempt to make the world less complex than it is? Furthermore, what, if anything, do the notions of representation, iconicity, iconoclasm, the pictorial turn and the power of images still mean in an age of immersion in synergistic visual-tactile virtual experiences when the distinction between the picture and the extra-pictorial continu-

um of reality seemingly disappears completely? We are interested in views on these and related topics from all relevant angles of any humanities discipline and all historical periods, natural sciences and arts, as well as interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches.

In order to consider your work for publication in the “New Theories” journal, vol. 5, no. 1/2023, please submit your abstract (300–500 words in English) and a short CV, together with the information on your most recent titles published, via e-mail by March 1, 2023 either to the Editor-in-Chief (kresimirpurgar@gmail.com) or deputy editors (lrafolt@gmail.com or dpapo@ffos.hr).

Participants will be informed by April 1, 2023 on the acceptance of their abstracts. Deadline for submissions of the complete manuscript (max. 8.000 words) is September 1, 2023 and is followed by a double-blind peer review process.

Papers written in Croatian, English, German, French, Italian, Spanish, Polish and Czech are accepted provided that they are grammatically correct, stylistically appropriate and proofread. Submitted manuscript must not have been published previously and must conform to the author guidelines available here: <https://hrcak.srce.hr/en/Nove-teorije>

Reference:

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